

Complex Sentences

7c. A **complex sentence** contains one independent clause and at least one subordinate clause.

A subordinate clause cannot stand alone as a sentence. The following words are often used to introduce subordinate clauses: *who, whose, whom, which, that, after, as, because, if, since, before, when*.

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE I often go to the library

SUBORDINATE CLAUSE because I like to read

COMPLEX SENTENCE **Because I like to read,** I often go to the library.

EXERCISE A The sentences in the following paragraph are complex sentences. For each sentence, underline the independent clause once and the subordinate clause twice.

Example [1] Mr. Morales, who is my English teacher, encouraged me to be a writer.

[1] Since I was five years old, I have read in bed at night. [2] For my twelfth birthday I received *A Light in the Attic*, which is a book of poems. [3] Before I go to sleep, I sometimes read my favorite poems to my little brother. [4] As he listens to me, he closes his eyes and falls asleep. [5] When he wakes up in the morning, he usually asks about the ending of a poem. [6] I may be a writer or an editor when I grow up. [7] My Aunt Sabrina, who lives in Dallas, is a copyeditor for a newspaper. [8] If I study hard, I can become an editor, too. [9] A job as an editor makes sense for me because I love words. [10] The books that I love most sit on a special shelf in my room.

EXERCISE B The sentences in the following paragraph are complex sentences. For each sentence, underline the independent clause once and the subordinate clause twice.

Example [1] When I read some Greek myths last summer, I learned a lot of interesting things.

[11] As I read, I learned about Arachne, a character in a famous Greek myth. [12] In the stories, she weaves tapestries that are very beautiful. [13] Because Arachne is such a good weaver, she begins to boast about her skill. [14] Athena, who is the goddess of arts and crafts, hears about Arachne's boastfulness and decides to pay Arachne a visit. [15] After Athena arrives, she warns Arachne not to be so boastful. [16] Because Arachne refuses to listen, the goddess Athena challenges her to a weaving contest. [17] When the contest that Athena proposes ends in a draw, Athena destroys Arachne's tapestry and loom. [18] Because she feels both guilty and insulted, Arachne dies. [19] Because Athena feels sorry for Arachne, she brings Arachne back to life and turns her into a spider. [20] According to the myth, spiders, who are also excellent weavers, are descended from Arachne.